

NEW HOUSING NEW YORK LEGACY PROJECT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

October 20, 2006

Questions & Answers II



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Michael R. Bloomberg, *Mayor*

Daniel L. Doctoroff
Deputy Mayor for Economic Redevelopment and Rebuilding

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The New Housing Marketplace

CREATING HOUSING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION



AIA New York Chapter



I. Development Site: Site, Zoning, Survey, Brownfield Issues**1. Can the Phase II environmental review be extended beyond the initial site area into the Rail ROW?**

The Phase II Investigation Grant that HPD received for the project is closed and the investigation complete. The conditions of the Rail ROW should be similar to what was observed in the initial site area – SVOCs, metals and some PCBs. (Every Finalist Team has received a copy of the Phase II report; please refer to it for more details.) HPD has made provisions to do some work on the former gas station property at the corner of E. 156th Street and Brook Avenue sometime this winter - advance 1-2 borings and a test pit to identify possible underground storage tanks. This work could be expanded, if necessary.

2. Is a Phase I environmental report available for the rail track area?

No. Please refer to Question 1.

3. Based on the Phase II, can HPD provide a range of probable costs for environmental remediation of the site?

Yes. The environmental remediation estimate worksheet was sent via email to all Finalist Teams. If you would like another copy of it, please contact Karen Hu at huka@hpd.nyc.gov. Please keep in mind that this worksheet is an estimate based on what is currently known about the site conditions from the Phase II report. Actual costs will vary based on actual conditions.

4. Will HPD provide a geotechnical report for the original site area? For the track area?

A geotechnical report will be available for the original site only by mid-October. As soon as it is available, the report will be sent out to the Finalist Teams.

5. The RFP mentioned that code suggestions are welcome. Can the NHNY Steering Committee elaborate on this statement?

If creating designs that are in full compliance with the New York City Building Code and the Zoning Resolution inhibits creative solutions, Finalist Teams can submit modifications, provided the changes are accompanied by a detailed description of the issue(s) that the Finalist Teams want to change, an explanation of why such modification is considered necessary or desirable, and how life safety will be maintained. Please remember this RFP is looking for replicable models. *The narrative should be limited to two (2) pages.*

6. Are teams allowed to suggest changes in the FAR in order to offer larger unit sizes? If so, what are the parameters?

Finalist Teams may propose alternatives to the rezoning of the site to C4-4, provided that detailed reasons are given explaining how it would help achieve the goals of the competition.

Please keep in mind that the Finalist Teams may use some or all of the development rights from the South Bronx High School athletic field to the south of the NHNY Site.

7. How will compliance with zoning, exploration of alternate envelopes or relief from specific requirements be judged or evaluated by the jury?

The Jury will not disqualify Finalist Teams or deduct points for proposing code or zoning changes. Please see Question 6 for changes to the proposed rezoning and Question 5 about the required supporting documentation for any proposed alternatives to the current zoning and code. Please remember this RFP is looking for replicable models.

8. What is the new site footprint?

The new boundaries of the Site are E. 156th Street to the north, the retaining wall to the east, the South Bronx High School athletic field to the south and Brook Avenue to the west. Please refer to the Site Survey for more information.

9. What is the revised unit estimate? Is there a unit minimum?

With the potential acquisition of the Rail ROW from the private owner, all Finalist Teams are encouraged to propose more units than the previous 150 unit estimate. However, there is no unit minimum.

10. What, if any, are the height restrictions for the building?

The height restrictions, if any, are determined by the proposed rezoning of the NHNY Site. Depending on whether Finalist Teams will choose to use the optional Quality Housing program or not, the FAR and the height restrictions will differ. Please refer to Question 6 and to the [Zoning Resolution](#) for more details.

11. On Forms K5, K6 and K7, what is meant by "Community Space"? Is this defined as anything that is not residential?

Community space refers to community facility space that is sometimes required by zoning, particularly if Finalist Teams are electing to use the optional Quality Housing program. Please refer to the [Zoning Resolution](#) for more details.

12. Is it possible to obtain an air and light easement along the south property line from the DOE owned ballpark?

HPD is working to resolve this question with DOE. We hope to provide an answer to the Finalist Teams soon.

13. Is there a restriction or regulation on South facing windows due to noise generated from the ball field?

Given the number of planned developments in the immediate adjacent area and the projected increase in traffic along E. 156th Street and Brook Avenue, the winning Development Team will have to conduct a noise analysis as part of the CEQR process. Most likely, the building will require some level of noise attenuation to mitigate the noise issues generated by use of the ball field and from the increase in traffic in the area.

14. Will DOT be flexible in granting franchises to occupy or use space on, over or under the City streets and sidewalks if this serves an innovative solution?

Finalist Teams may propose innovative solutions that will require applying to DOT for a franchise, provided that a detailed description is provided of the issue(s) that the Finalist Teams want to change, an explanation of why such modification is considered necessary or desirable, and how public safety and the smooth flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be maintained.

Each Finalist Team should be aware of the new Coordinated Street Furniture Franchise that was approved this year, which will provide for new designs for bus shelters, street furniture and newsstands. For more information, please go to the following URL:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/permits/streetfurniture.html>

15. Is it possible for HPD to provide detailed USGS topographical information of the surrounding area?

Detailed and updated USGS topographic maps of the area are not available through HPD. However, the Bronx Borough President's Topographic Bureau has street maps that identify curb elevations. Please note that there will be a charge to copy the maps.

Bronx Borough President Topographic Bureau
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor, Bronx, NY 10451
Telephone: 718-590-3047
MTA Subway stop: 4 Train to Yankee Stadium
Hours: Monday-Friday 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM.

16. Can a CAD map of the NHNY area be provided?

Yes. The CAD map was sent via email to all Finalist Teams. If you would like another copy of it, please contact Karen Hu at huka@hpd.nyc.gov.

17. On the competition site (southeastern quadrant at the approximate edge of the railroad easement) there lies a manhole. During our team's most recent site visit we spoke with a drill operator who was on site. He led us to the manhole, said it was an active Con-Ed (electric?) utility, and pointed out a line of red flagging that followed the former rail tracks. Can you please confirm the purpose of this manhole and any accompanying utility line? Also, can the manhole and what lies beneath be added to the land survey?

The Department of Design and Construction is looking into this matter. Finalist Teams will be notified as soon as more information is available.

II. Project Program

1. Is there a preference for homeownership or rental?

There is no preference for homeownership or rental. However, mixed-income housing is a priority.

2. The Department of City Planning has expressed a strong preference for middle-income housing in the South Bronx. How should the Finalist Teams consider this preference in regards to the NHNY Legacy Project?

Finalist Teams are welcomed to propose middle-income housing if they can make the financing work, but this is not a stated preference for this RFP.

3. What does “healthy living” mean?

The NHNY Steering Committee and Jury are looking for proposals that can not only integrate sustainable green building features into the project but also address the increasing incidence of obesity and asthma through building design and programmatic elements. Please refer to Section 5.1 of the RFP for further description.

4. Are there any specific retail requirements for the site? The RFP is very clear that some sort of community or commercial use is desired to create a mixed-use development. However, the feedback we got at the 2nd Community Workshop on September 25th seemed to indicate that residents did not see a need for traditional retail.

The project should include some mix of residential, commercial, community and open space uses. Beyond that, there is no specific retail requirement.

5. What is the status of the Blackacre Project (Bronxchester Site 6 and 7)?

According to the NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC), the mixed-use project on Bronxchester Site 6 and 7 is progressing. The project is seeking a rezoning from M to C6-2. EDC is hoping to certify the project with City Planning in December.

III. Financing Program, Affordability Requirements, Public Subsidies

- 1. Our team thinks there is an interesting opportunity to do homeownership and rental with different housing types. Can we apply for more subsidies?**

The maximum subsidy from HPD and HDC is \$85,000 per unit, as stated in the RFP. However, all Finalist Teams may seek other sources of funding to underwrite the project.

- 2. Financing programs are creatures of political will. Will the City support this project and fund it? Will this project be looked upon competitively when applying to non-City sources for funding?**

This project is a high-profile project for the City. Therefore, it will be reviewed favorably for City funding, as long as the Finalist Teams adhere to the guidelines detailed in the term sheets. The winning Development Team can also look to the City for support letters when applying for non-City sources of funding.

- 3. Is 9% competitive low-income housing tax credits considered part of the \$85,000 subsidy cap from HPD and HDC?**

Please see the chart below for a detailed explanation of what is covered by the subsidy cap.

| Financial Programs covered by the \$85,000/ unit Subsidy Cap | Funding Programs <u>NOT</u> covered by the \$85,000 subsidy cap |
|---|--|
| <p>HDC/ HPD Direct Cash Subsidy Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Housing Opportunities Program (New HOP) • Low-Income Affordable Marketplace Program (LAMP) • 80/20 Program • Mixed-Income Housing Program (50/30/20) • Cooperative Housing Program • Mixed-Income Rental Program (MIRP) • Supportive Housing Loan Program (SHLP) • Participation Loan Program (PLP) • HOME Funds <p>Affordable Housing Corporation Funds (AHC)</p> | <p>NYS Dept. of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) Programs</p> <p>Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4% as-of-right LIHTCs • 9% competitive LIHTCs <p>New Market Tax Credits</p> <p>Tax Exempt Bond Financing</p> <p>Tax Incentives Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J-51 • 421-a • UDAAP <p>Borough President and City Council funds</p> <p>New York State Energy Research Authority (NYSERDA) Programs</p> <p>Federal 202 Funds</p> <p>Other private grants, awards and funds</p> |

4. How do we denote possible sources of funding?

If you feel fairly confident about getting discretionary funds and have letters of support, you may include them in your budget.

5. Can the Step 2 Submission forms, particularly Tab K, be made available in Excel form?

Yes. Tab K was sent via email to all Finalist Teams. If you would like another copy of it, please contact Karen Hu at huka@hpd.nyc.gov.

6. How will the Jury regard the use of union contractors?

The use of union contractors is not a factor, so long as the Finalist Team can prove that the project is buildable without exceeding the \$85,000 per unit HPD/HDC direct cash subsidy cap.

7. What can be expected from NYSERDA in terms of financial assistance, and what are the terms?

For the purpose of the financial package of this proposal, each team may assume a NYSERDA incentive in the amount of \$150,000. The grant will cover:

- \$50,000 for an Energy Star consultant who will work with the team to do a full energy model
- \$15,000 for a verification contractor
- Some portion of incremental costs

The \$150,000 place-holder grant will be used only for the purposes of the NHNY Step 2 Full Submission and does not represent the incentives that will be offered as part of the NYSERDA Multifamily High-Rise Energy Star roll-out.

Please also see the **RFP Addendum No. 2**, sent to all Finalist Teams on October 19th, for clarification on the Sustainability submission materials. If you would like another copy of it, please contact Karen Hu at huka@hpd.nyc.gov.

8. Is there some market research HPD can share about the area?

Yes. EDC is preparing a draft retail study for the South Bronx. It will be sent out as soon as it is ready.

Competition

- 1. Due to the complexity of the project and because it is setting new standards for affordable and sustainable housing, we believe it would be beneficial for the project if the Finalist Teams can be given a chance to present their proposals to the Jury, in addition to producing the required submission materials as stated in the RFP. Can this be considered?**

The NHNY Jury has expressed a preference to review *only* the submission materials. However, in recognition of the complexities of the project, each Finalist Team may now provide a written narrative (Exhibits Tab I) of up to **four** (4) pages instead of the previous limit of two (2) pages.

This change does not affect the two (2) page limit for the required sustainability requirements written narrative (see the RFP Addendum No. 2).

- 2. How will the proposals be reviewed?**

Three technical review committees will review the proposals for design and compliance with zoning and the existing building code (and explanation of any proposed modifications); financial feasibility; and compliance with the sustainability requirements as stated in the RFP and Addendum No. 2. Each technical review committee will issue a report, which the Jury will review along with the proposals.

- 3. When and how will the Finalist Teams receive the \$10,000 stipend?**

Stipends will be dispersed on December 1, 2006 – the day the Final Proposals are due. The stipends are intended to recognize the importance of innovative design in this competition. Therefore, the stipends are to go to the architects. Only **one** (1) check will be prepared for each Finalist Team; it will be up to the teams with 2 or more design firms to decide how the stipend will be split. Each Finalist Team should send Karen Hu at huka@hpd.nyc.gov the name of the firm/person to whom each check should be made out.

V. Community Outreach

1. Is there community consensus about the use and design of the NHNY Site?

No. Community Board 1 and some members of the public, through two community workshops, have expressed their concerns and preferences for the site, but no consensus has been reached in those workshops. The project will go through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), so the Community Board, Borough President and City Council will review the designated Development Team's proposal and design.

The following are discussion points, in no particular order, as articulated by participants at the 2nd Community Workshop on September 25th:

- Creating a sense of security is a priority and can be addressed with:
 - Controlled, safe spaces to enjoy the open air, such as a roof-top garden or an inner courtyard
 - Internal security, CCTV systems
 - Well-lit streets
 - No hidden pathways
 - More police patrols to prevent loitering
 - Design features that encourage foot traffic
- Quality of life can be improved with:
 - Bigger living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens with windows
 - Kitchens with dishwashers
 - Bathrooms with whirlpool tubs
 - Laundry rooms
 - More storage areas
 - A strategically located, more efficient heating system
 - A ground floor fitness center, with a sauna, swimming pool, roof-top track and physician on staff, which can be open to the public on a membership basis
 - Cable and internet wiring
 - Parking provided onsite for residents
- Instead of commercial facilities on the ground floor, community-oriented facilities are preferred, such as day-care and/or community center for young people and seniors

As a reminder, the following are top priorities, as articulated by participants at the 1st Community Workshop on May 31st (further details on the workshop are available at the NHNY website):

- Onsite power production
- A minimum of 50% of the units affordable to low-income people in the community

- Affordable home ownership, diversity, civic pride and stability
- Quality and beneficial retail uses: healthy food store or supermarket, bookstore, etc.
- A showcase for sustainable design elements
- Building should blend in with neighborhood context, not a “new box”
- Recreation/community center space, daycare and programs for youth
- A beautiful and safe building and community
- Green space on interior and exterior
- Light and open space
- Generous room sizes with usable space to accommodate furniture comfortably; private dining room areas
- Windows in bathrooms and kitchens
- Laundry for residents in each unit or floor, not in basement, with exterior views